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ABSTRACT

A study was done of transfer students entering the University of California (Davis) from Fall 1976 through Spring 1991. "Transfers" are students who enter with at least sophomore standing (more than 40 transfer units), are identified by undergraduate admissions as advanced standing, or whose source school is not a high school. Study of transfer students' enrollment patterns found that: (1) of new undergraduates to Davis 38 percent were transfers; (2) of all Black, American Indian, Chicano and Latino students at Davis from 1976 to 1990, 36 percent were transfers; (3) transfer patterns differed only slightly by gender; (4) among 1990 transfers, 70 percent entered as juniors; (5) among transfers who enrolled from 1980 through 1990, 66 percent came from community colleges; and (6) in 1990, 728 students entered with Transfer Admission Agreements. Over all the proportion of transfer students has declined. The proportion of non-White transfer students has grown slowly. For graduation rates the study found that almost three-quarters of transfer students earn degrees at Davis; Asian and White students have the highest graduation rates, and those transferring as juniors graduate at rates higher than those who enter as freshmen or sophomores. The type of institution attended before transferring to Davis did not appear to influence educational outcomes. Transfer students were found, as were all undergraduates, to take more time to complete degrees than in earlier years. Included are eight displays, and seven tables. (JB)

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RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

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ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION PATTERNS OF UNDERGRADUATES TRANSFERRING TO UC DAVIS: 1976-1991

BACKGROUND

The California Master Plan for Higher Education envisions a complementary working relationship between the University of California and the California Community Colleges. Under the Plan, the University selectively admits only the top one-eighth of California's high school graduates. Community colleges, on the other hand, admit all adults, thus providing access to postsecondary education for those who cannot or choose not to enter a four-year institution after high school. Easy access to the University by qualified undergraduates from the community colleges requires cooperation and coordination by both systems.

In support of this transfer process, UC Davis has initiated several programs to encourage entrance into the campus. Even before a renewed emphasis on transfer emerged from the State's recent review of the Master Plan, UC Davis served potential transfer students through its Transfer Opportunity Program (TOP). Initiated in 1983, TOP served as a model for the statewide system of community college transfer centers; TOP now provides admissions advisors at 21 community colleges.

Transfer Admission Agreement

More recently, UC Davis pioneered the use of the Transfer Admission Agreement (TAA) within the University of California to address student complaints about the lack of guidelines for course work to be taken in preparation for transfer. Begun in 1986 as an experiment in cooperation with the Los Rios Community College District, this program now includes 54 community colleges. Students signing a Transfer Admission Agreement get this clear commitment from UC Davis: completion of specified course work with a required GPA guarantees admission for a particular quarter.

Transfer Admission Agreements benefit both students and the campus. By concentrating on a specific set of courses, students can reduce the time spent preparing for transfer. The campus gains by enrolling students with more focused preparation for upper division major course work; such preparation could lead to improved student performance and reduce the time needed to complete the baccalaureate degree.

The program increasingly accounts for a larger share of the students transferring to UC Davis. The proportion of transfers entering with TAAs has increased from 16% (1987) to 35% (1990), while their number grew almost four-fold (from 202 to 782). These increases occurred because the campus wrote more agreements as the program moved from experiment to established

admission procedure. In addition, a higher proportion of TAA students enroll than applicants admitted by other means; 72% of TAA holders admitted in 1990 enrolled, compared with about 45% of other advanced standing applicants.

Preliminary calculations by Undergraduate Admissions indicate about 63% of all transfers entering in Fall 1991 held Transfer Admission Agreements. Two additional factors influenced this high proportion: in 1990 the campus undergraduate population grew more rapidly than projected; in 1991 the University budget was cut. As a result, the campus reduced the number of new undergraduates (including transfers) admitted but honored all existing Transfer Admission Agreements. As undergraduate enrollment resumes its gradual increase in the future, the campus will continue to write new agreements, albeit on a more restricted basis.

Scope of Report

This report describes transfers entering UC Davis from Fall 1976 through Spring 1991. "Transfers" are students who enter with at least sophomore standing (more than 40 transfer units), are identified by Undergraduate Admissions as advanced standing, or whose source school is not a high school. Students not meeting these criteria are called "new from high school."

For purposes of simplified comparison, domestic ethnic groups are aggregated as follows: Asian (includes Chinese, East Indian/Pakistani, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Other Asian and Pacific Islander students); Student Affirmative Action or SAA (includes Black, American Indian, Chicano and Latino students); and White (includes students who list Other or whose ethnicity is unknown).

The report uses academic year (Fall through Spring quarters) totals because a substantial proportion (20-30%) of transfers enter UC Davis in Winter and Spring quarters. Unless otherwise indicated, references to a particular year signify a full academic year (e.g., 1989 designates Fall 1989 through Spring 1990).

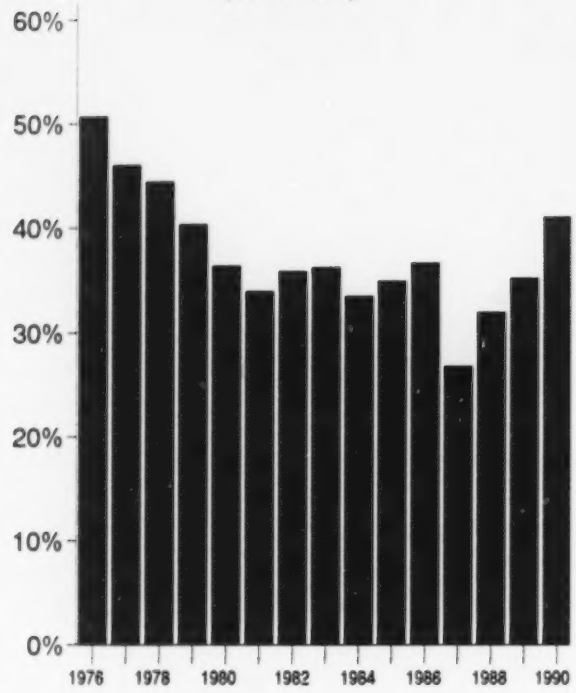
ENROLLMENT PATTERNS

- A large proportion (38%) of new undergraduates are transfers to UC Davis—25,172 enrolled from 1976 through 1990.
- From 1976 through 1990, 2,494 Black, American Indian, Chicano and Latino students transferred—36% of all SAA entrants.
- Transfer patterns differ only slightly by gender during this period: 39% of men and 36% of women transferred.
- Among 1990 transfers, 70% entered as juniors, the highest proportion to date.
- Among transfers who enrolled from 1980 through 1990, 66% came from community colleges.
- In 1990, 782 (35%) students entered with Transfer Admission Agreements, as have almost 1,800 (26%) transfers enrolled since 1987.

Transfers as a Proportion of Undergraduates

Although the number of new undergraduates entering UC Davis increased 20% from 1976 through 1990, the number and proportion of transfers declined (see Table 1). From 1976 to 1981 transfers fell from 51% to 34% of entrants, and remained at or near that level through 1986 (Display 1, page following). In 1987 the transfer proportion dropped to 27% but has since risen steadily to 41% (1990). The number of transfers increased substantially from a low of 1,279 (1987) to 2,217 (1990)—still less than the high point during this period of 2,282 (1976).

DISPLAY 1
The Proportion of Undergraduates Transferring to UC Davis (1976-1990)

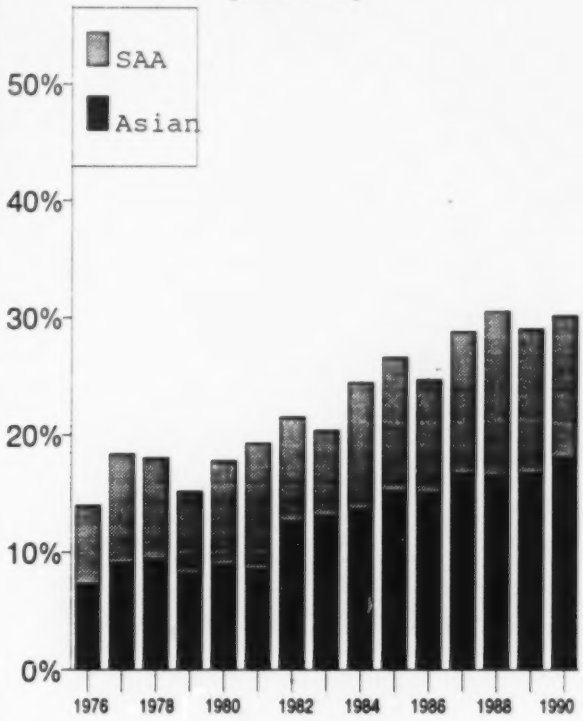


Ethnic Background

Paralleling demographic changes in California, campus enrollment reflects growing diversity; since 1976 the proportion of Asian and SAA (i.e., non-White) students among new undergraduates increased from 15% to 38% (numbers in Table 1). The proportion of non-White students among transfers grew also, but at a slower pace, going from 14% to 30% (see Display 2). The proportion of Asians among transfers grew steadily over the period, rising from 7% (1976) to 18% (1990). The proportion of SAA transfers rose more slowly, going from 7% (1976) to 12% (1990), with a high of 14% (1988). From 1976 through 1990, the combined number of Asian and SAA transfers increased 109% (from 320 to 669) while White transfers decreased 21% (from 1,962 to 1,548). Asian transfers alone increased 141% (from 167 to 402), while SAA transfers grew 75% (from 153 to 267).

Changes in the numbers of transfers from individual ethnic groups (Table 2) further reveal the increasing diversity of the undergraduate population. Other Asian, a category that includes Southeast Asian students, grew six-fold from 14 to 89 (1976 and 1990 respectively). Filipino transfers jumped from 10 to 59. Latino transfer enrollment doubled from 30 to 61, as did new Chicano transfers—from 53 to 108. By comparison, Black transfers barely increased in number, going from 56 to 63 (Table 2). The small number of American Indian transfers remained relatively unchanged until 1990 when 35 enrolled, up from 14 in 1989.

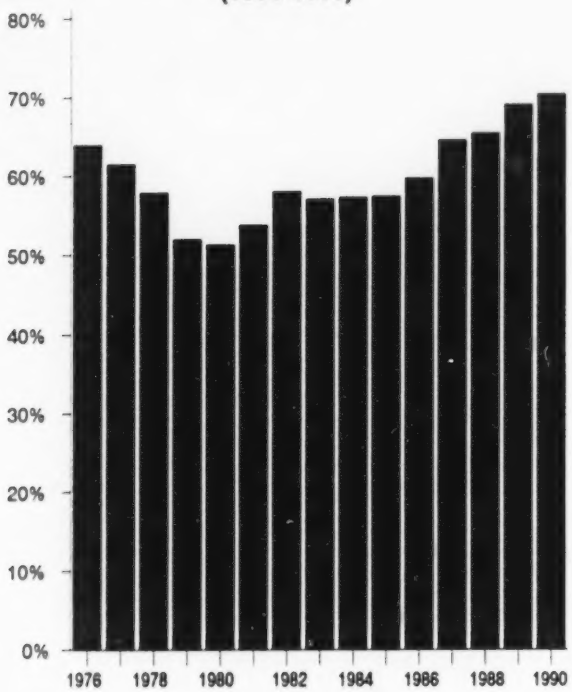
DISPLAY 2
The Proportion of SAA and Asian Students among Transfers (1976-1990)



Entering Class Level

As envisioned in the Master Plan, most students transfer to UC Davis as juniors (Table 3). Following earlier declines, the proportion of transfers entering as juniors increased and then leveled off during the early 1980s. Since 1986 that proportion has grown, reaching 70% in 1990—the highest proportion (Display 3, page following) and number (1,559) to date. Junior transfers make up 29% of all new 1990 undergraduates.

DISPLAY 3
The Proportion of Transfers Entering as Juniors (1976-1990)

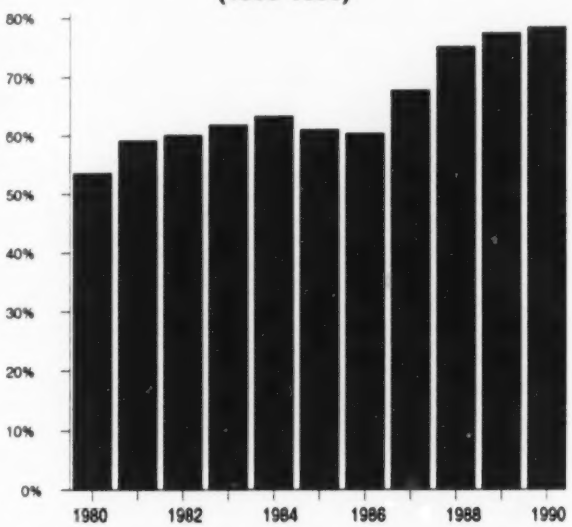


Over the period covered by this report, about 27% of transfers entered as sophomores, but their proportion declined from 32% (1984) to 18% (1990), reflecting increasing numbers of junior transfers. The proportion of transfers entering as freshmen fluctuated yearly, ranging from 12% (1981) to 6% (1989). In 1990 the number of new freshmen transfers jumped to 226, over 10% of all new transfers; many were Fall 1990 applicants from high school whose admission was deferred and who took courses elsewhere while awaiting entrance. From 1976 through 1990 senior transfers declined from 6% to less than 2%.

Source Schools of Transfers

Recent campus efforts to attract community college students appear successful. The proportion of students transferring from community colleges—about 60% from 1981 through 1986—increased sharply in 1987 and reached a high of 78% in 1990 (Display 4). The number of community college transfers increased from 867 (1987) to an unprecedented 1,740 students (1990), more than all transfers in 1989 (Table 4). About one in three (32%) of all 1990 entrants came from a community college, the highest proportion to date (Tables 1 and 4). Although a direct causal relationship cannot be inferred, these increases coincide with expansion of the Transfer Opportunity Program and development of the Transfer Admission Agreement program.

DISPLAY 4
The Proportion of Transfers Coming from Community Colleges (1980-1990)

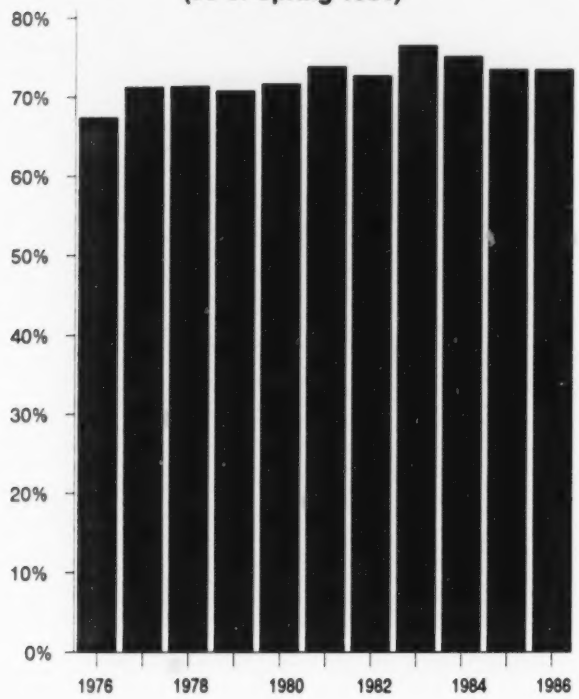


Transfers from other institutions decreased both relatively and absolutely from 1980 forward. In 1990, 82 transfers came from within the University of California, 100 from California State University (CSU) campuses, and 249 from other schools; these 431 students comprise 19% of transfers, down from 41% in 1980.

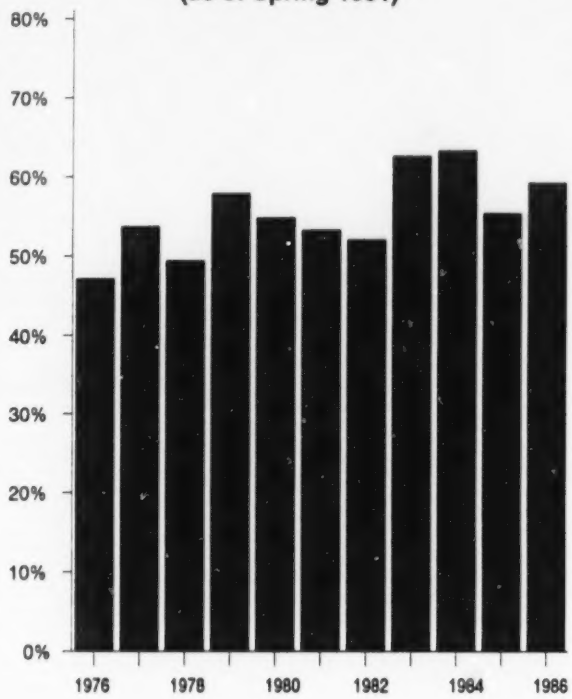
GRADUATION RATES

Almost three-quarters of transfer students earn baccalaureate degrees at UC Davis; 72% (13,236) who enrolled from 1976 through 1986 graduated by the end of Spring 1991 (Table 5). As seen in Display 5 (page following), graduation rates increased from 67% (1976 entrants) to a peak of 76% (1983) and leveled off at 74% (1985 and 1986 entrants). Graduation rates for those enrolling in 1986 and subsequent years will continue to grow as enrolled and returning students complete degrees.

DISPLAY 5
Graduation Rates of Transfers Enrolling 1976-1986 (as of Spring 1991)



DISPLAY 6
Graduation Rates of SAA Transfers Enrolling 1976-1986 (as of Spring 1991)



Asian and White transfer students graduate at rates at or above those for all transfers; 75% of Asian and 74% of White transfers entering from 1976 through 1986 graduated by the end of Spring 1991. By comparison, only 55% of SAA students graduated during this period, at rates 12-22 percentage points below those for all transfers (Table 5 and Displays 5 and 6). But graduation rates for SAA transfers have improved among more recent entrants, going from 47% (1976 entrants) to 63% (1984).

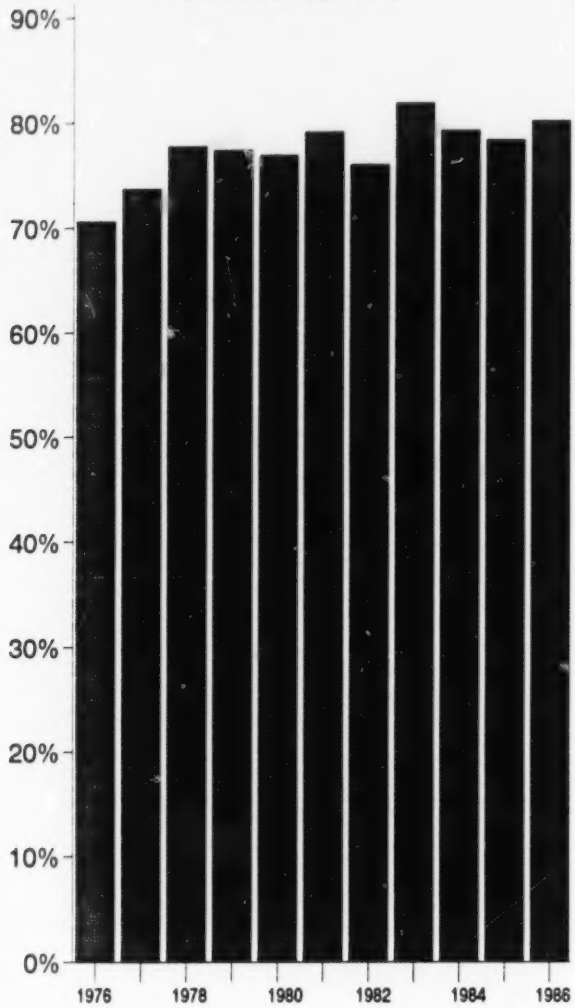
Past studies indicate a relationship between graduation rates and academic preparation prior to transfer. The Transfer Admission Agreement program allows campus representatives to work more closely with students prior to entrance to encourage adequate preparation for upper division studies; but it is still too early in the program to determine if TAA students are better prepared and if they graduate at higher rates than their non-TAA peers.

Graduation Rates by Level at Entrance

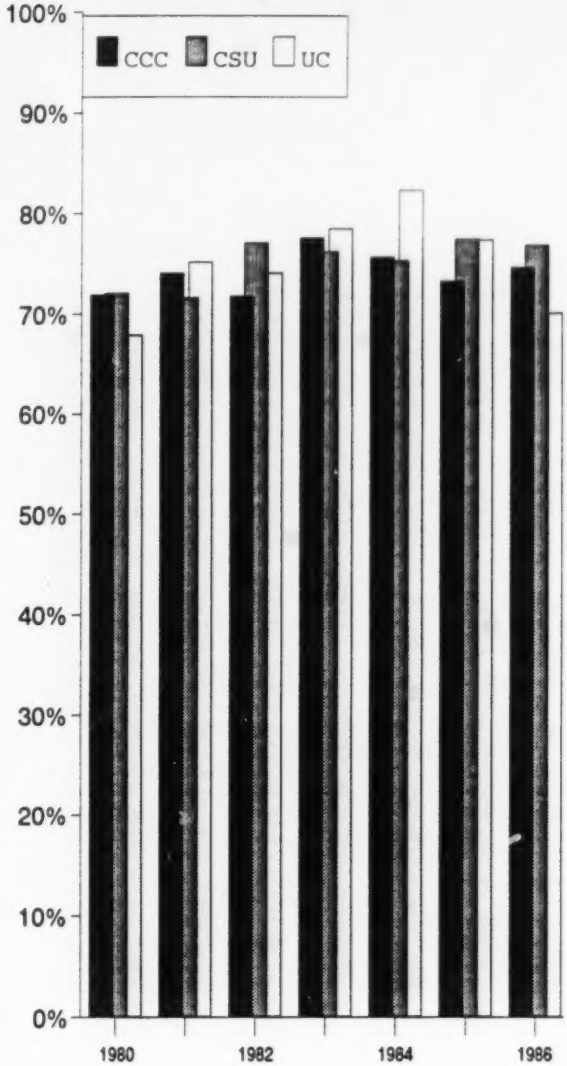
Among students transferring to UC Davis as juniors from 1976 through 1986, 77% graduated by the end of Spring 1991; their graduation rates vary over the period, reaching a peak of 82% for 1983 entrants (Display 7, page following). Junior transfers graduate at substantially higher rates than freshman (53%) and sophomore (68%) transfers and those who enter directly from high school (69%). Junior level transfers already have a substantial investment in their education when they enter and are probably more mature than students with less college experience.

Students new from high school who persist 7 or more quarters (to approximately junior level) graduate at even higher rates (87% to 90%) than junior level transfers. This difference is not unexpected; students who persist to the junior level have already adjusted to the unique academic and social environments of UC Davis and have probably formed strong personal ties to the campus; those who did not have probably already left.

DISPLAY 7
Graduation Rates of Junior Transfers Enrolling 1976-1986 (as of Spring 1991)



DISPLAY 8
Graduation Rates by Source School: Transfers Enrolling 1980-1986 (as of Spring 1991)



Graduation Rates by Source School

For most students, the type of institution attended before transferring to UC Davis does not appear to influence educational outcomes. Examined by type of source school, graduation rates fluctuate relative to each other but differ little over longer periods of time (Display 8). Among transfers entering from 1980 through 1986, 75% of those transferring from UC or CSU campuses had graduated by the end of Spring 1991, 74% from CCC campuses and 72% from other schools. SAA transfers from community colleges graduated at a rate slightly above those from other institutions (58% vs. 56%).

Time to Degree

Transfer students, similar to all undergraduates, are taking more time to complete degrees at UC Davis. Time to degree increased for transfers at all entry levels, freshman through senior. Among the graduates from the 1986 transfer cohort, 22% took more than 9 quarters to earn degrees, compared with 15% of those who transferred in 1976. This increase affects both students and the campus; the longer it takes students to graduate, the more personal and institutional resources that are expended.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although UC Davis continues to develop programs and policies to enroll more transfer students, external pressures influence continued success. Currently, the University of California faces increasing numbers of both high school and transfer applicants. These increases come at a time when budget constraints may prevent expansion of the UC system, thereby threatening its capability to provide a space for every eligible student.

Although the recently-enacted Hart transfer bill (SB121) directs the University to give priority consideration to students transferring from community colleges, it is too early to project what effects it will have on enrollment practices during the present fiscal crisis. (An analysis of SB121, prepared by the California Postsecondary Education Commission, is available from Student Affairs Research and Information.)

Despite these obstacles, the potential exists for the campus to increase SAA transfer enrollment. About 27% of the high school graduates entering community colleges in 1988 were SAA students (*California College Going Rates Fall 1988 Update*, California Postsecondary Education Commission, September 1989). Yet, in 1990 only 12% of community college transfers to UC Davis were SAA students. Although not everyone who enters a community college intends to transfer, many SAA students might transfer if encouraged and assisted. To this end, UC Davis is participating in the Cooperative Outreach Transfer project, a statewide experiment designed to provide follow-up services to former participants of the UC Early Academic Outreach program who enroll in community colleges. In Spring 1992, UC Davis and the Los Rios Community College District will implement the first stages of this project.

METHODOLOGY

Unless otherwise noted, data presented here come from the Composite Undergraduate File (CUF), a longitudinal database of undergraduates enrolled at UC Davis since 1966 and updated from Student Record System files through Spring 1991. Data presented here may differ from those reported in *Enrollment and Graduation of Undergraduates Transferring to UC Davis: 1976-1989* (February 1990) because minor corrections have been made to the data base, Filipinos are no longer included in SAA data and some students have since graduated or left.

TABLES

TABLE 1

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—Transfers and All New Undergraduates
by ethnicity and gender

Year	Total		SAA[1]		Asian		White		Men		Women	
	transfers	all	transfers	all	transfers	all	transfers	all	transfers	all	transfers	all
1976-77	2,282	4,501	153	320	167	374	1,962	3,807	1,209	2,229	1,073	2,272
1977-78	1,896	4,125	177	341	172	422	1,547	3,362	938	2,042	958	2,083
1978-79	1,914	4,309	166	382	180	468	1,568	3,459	960	2,132	954	2,177
1979-80	1,865	4,628	133	372	151	491	1,581	3,765	903	2,153	962	2,475
1980-81	1,745	4,799	155	376	156	559	1,434	3,864	827	2,253	918	2,546
1981-82	1,411	4,153	152	422	120	498	1,139	3,233	651	1,864	760	2,289
1982-83	1,408	3,925	125	408	178	605	1,105	2,912	664	1,727	744	2,198
1983-84	1,393	3,842	102	345	182	611	1,109	2,886	686	1,793	707	2,049
1984-85	1,517	4,530	164	436	207	821	1,146	3,273	773	2,206	744	2,324
1985-86	1,472	4,211	168	476	224	803	1,080	2,932	712	1,939	760	2,272
1986-87	1,447	3,947	140	450	218	829	1,089	2,668	714	1,890	733	2,057
1987-88	1,279	4,774	155	494	213	1,119	911	3,161	654	2,278	625	2,496
1988-89	1,624	5,080	228	647	268	1,265	1,128	3,168	772	2,389	852	2,691
1989-90	1,702	4,827	209	705	285	1,077	1,208	3,045	829	2,329	873	2,498
1990-91	2,217	5,396	267	761	402	1,281	1,548	3,354	1,053	2,557	1,164	2,839

[1]SAA includes American Indian, Black, Chicano and Latino.

TABLE 2

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—All New Transfers
by ethnicity

Year	Total	American Indian	Black/ African American	Chicano/ Mexican American	Chinese American	East Indian/ Pakistani	Filipino/ Pilipino	Japanese American	Korean American	Latino/ Spanish American	Other Asian	Pacific Islander	White and Unknown
1976-77	2,282	14	56	53	77	5	10	56	5	30	14	0	1,962
1977-78	1,896	22	55	61	68	6	13	56	7	39	19	3	1,547
1978-79	1,914	19	61	43	80	6	12	49	6	43	23	4	1,568
1979-80	1,865	10	51	47	58	4	16	45	8	25	20	0	1,581
1980-81	1,745	17	49	55	63	2	14	44	10	34	23	0	1,434
1981-82	1,411	19	53	45	44	4	22	19	9	35	18	4	1,139
1982-83	1,408	14	30	48	57	2	19	40	11	33	45	4	1,105
1983-84	1,393	9	34	25	72	3	13	47	14	34	32	1	1,109
1984-85	1,517	10	56	65	75	9	27	39	15	33	40	2	1,146
1985-86	1,472	14	50	61	85	7	31	49	14	43	36	2	1,080
1986-87	1,447	12	44	49	76	8	33	36	16	35	45	4	1,089
1987-88	1,279	13	38	57	72	9	27	29	15	47	58	3	911
1988-89	1,624	23	59	104	76	14	41	42	9	42	83	3	1,128
1989-90	1,702	14	55	90	107	10	32	36	24	50	68	8	1,208
1990-91	2,217	35	63	108	144	24	59	45	36	61	89	5	1,548

TABLE 3

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—All New Transfers
by level at entry

Year	Total	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
1976-77	2,282	196	498	1,459	129
1977-78	1,896	147	486	1,166	97
1978-79	1,914	155	554	1,108	97
1979-80	1,865	224	566	969	106
1980-81	1,745	200	571	895	79
1981-82	1,411	175	421	760	55
1982-83	1,408	140	414	817	37
1983-84	1,393	150	402	795	46
1984-85	1,517	117	484	869	47
1985-86	1,472	134	445	846	47
1986-87	1,447	135	388	864	60
1987-88	1,279	87	326	825	41
1988-89	1,624	115	411	1,062	36
1989-90	1,702	98	387	1,174	43
1990-91	2,217	226	391	1,559	41

TABLE 4

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—All New Transfers
by source school

Year[1]	Total	UC	CSU	CCC	Other	Unknown
1980-81	1,745	184	201	936	328	96
1981-82	1,411	121	155	834	252	49
1982-83	1,408	116	166	847	262	17
1983-84	1,393	158	126	862	240	7
1984-85	1,517	131	158	961	247	20
1985-86	1,472	137	160	900	263	12
1986-87	1,447	124	156	874	265	28
1987-88	1,279	109	117	867	173	13
1988-89	1,624	113	93	1,221	194	3
1989-90	1,702	93	109	1,319	178	3
1990-91	2,217	82	100	1,740	249	46

[1]**Valid source school data not available before 1980.**

TABLE 5

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—Transfers Graduated by Spring 1991
by ethnicity and gender

Entry Year*	Total		SAA[1]		Asian		White		Men		Women	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
1976-77	1,538	67%	72	47%	121	72%	1,345	69%	835	69%	703	66%
1977-78	1,350	71	95	54	136	79	1,119	72	688	73	662	69
1978-79	1,364	71	82	49	128	71	1,154	74	703	73	661	69
1979-80	1,319	71	77	58	112	74	1,130	71	649	72	670	70
1980-81	1,249	72	85	55	106	68	1,058	74	601	73	648	71
1981-82	1,042	74	81	53	88	73	873	77	486	75	556	73
1982-83	1,023	73	65	52	144	81	814	74	499	75	524	70
1983-84	1,065	76	64	63	134	74	867	78	542	79	523	74
1984-85	1,140	75	104	63	161	78	875	76	573	74	567	76
1985-86	1,082	74	93	55	167	75	822	76	514	72	568	75
1986-87	1,064	74	83	59	160	73	821	75	517	72	547	75
1987-88	860	67	90	58	148	69	622	68	427	65	433	69

[1]SAA includes American Indian, Black, Chicano and Latino.
*** Many students transferring in 1986 and 1987 are still enrolled.**

TABLE 6

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—Transfers Graduated by Spring 1991
by level at entry

Year*	Total		Freshman		Sophomore		Junior		Senior	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
1976-77	1,538	67%	99	51%	313	63%	1,030	71%	96	74%
1977-78	1,350	71	81	55	329	68	859	74	81	84
1978-79	1,364	71	69	45	361	65	862	78	72	74
1979-80	1,319	71	121	54	369	65	750	77	79	75
1980-81	1,249	72	104	52	387	68	688	77	70	89
1981-82	1,042	74	106	61	284	67	601	79	51	93
1982-83	1,023	73	80	57	292	71	621	76	30	81
1983-84	1,065	76	93	62	285	71	651	82	36	78
1984-85	1,140	75	64	55	347	72	689	79	40	85
1985-86	1,082	74	70	52	311	70	663	78	38	81
1986-87	1,064	74	59	44	268	69	693	80	44	73
1987-88	860	67	28	32	183	56	618	75	31	76

*** Many students transferring in 1986 and 1987 are still enrolled.**

TABLE 7

UC Davis Academic Year Totals—Transfers Graduated by Spring 1991
by source school

Year*	Total		UC		CSU		CCC		Other		Unknown	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
1980-81	1,249	72%	125	68%	145	72%	673	72%	230	70%	76	79%
1981-82	1,042	74	91	75	111	72	618	74	193	77	29	59
1982-83	1,023	73	86	74	128	77	608	72	191	73	10	59
1983-84	1,065	76	124	78	96	76	669	78	172	72	4	57
1984-85	1,140	75	108	82	119	75	727	76	175	71	11	55
1985-86	1,082	74	106	77	124	78	660	73	186	71	6	50
1986-87	1,064	74	87	70	120	77	653	75	186	70	18	64
1987-88	860	67	74	68	88	75	595	69	98	57	5	38

*** Many students transferring in 1986 and 1987 are still enrolled.**

Although this report seeks to present the most pertinent information about transfer students, it necessarily excludes much detail. Readers who want more information about transfers should contact:

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